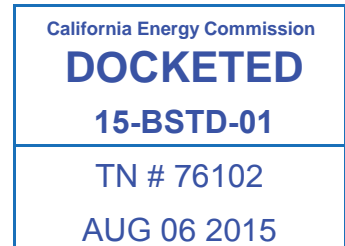


**From:** Gene Thomas <gthomas@ecoact.org>  
**Sent:** Wednesday, August 05, 2015 5:21 PM  
**To:** Energy - Docket Optical System  
**Subject:** Docket 15-BSTD-01: Comments of Ecology Action Re: Adoption of 15-Day Language for the 2016 Energy Efficiency Building Standards

California Energy Commission  
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Re: 2016 Building Standards Update; 15-BSTD-01 Rulemaking Comments of Ecology Action on Lighting Alterations Language

Ecology Action appreciates the opportunity to comment on this critically important proceeding. Our comments here specifically address the latest version of the proposed 15-Day Language dealing with lighting system Alterations and Modifications in Sections 141.0(b)2.I-L.

The proposed lighting system Alterations and Modifications language incorporates a great deal of stakeholder compromise. As can be expected in such cases, none of the parties are completely happy with every provision. Some parties like the big labor unions and controls manufacturers would like to see much more stringent requirements than the 2013 Code. The retrofit industry and program implementers including Ecology Action would prefer to see a general exception for lighting retrofits in which projects that achieve a set savings threshold do not trigger Code. Despite the disagreements, the proposed 2016 language saves appreciably more energy overall than the 2013 Code while providing some much-needed relief for the lighting retrofit industry.

Ecology Action supports the proposed 2016 Lighting Alterations language, albeit with reservations. On the positive side, we believe that the language has largely mitigated the 2013 Code's excessive controls provisions that led to a doubling of retrofit project costs and brought the retrofit industry to a virtual standstill. However, permitting and compliance costs have been another significant barrier to lighting retrofits since the 2013 Code took effect. Under the proposed language most lighting retrofits will still trigger Code and require obtaining a permit of some kind. Our greatest concern now is how the compliance issue is handled. Unless the compliance process is made very simple and straightforward, Code-triggering retrofit projects will continue to be avoided en masse and old, inefficient equipment will continue to be stranded in thousands of businesses across California.

Ecology Action believes it is absolutely vital that the permitting process for lighting retrofits uses a simplified, over-the-counter approach, and that compliance forms and documentation requirements should be highly streamlined and automated. Some opponents have commented that the proposed language is "unenforceable". In reality, enforcement can be very simple. For example, wattages can be adequately documented using a contractor work order or worksheet that gives detailed, space-by-space descriptions of preexisting and newly installed fixture types and wattages; contractors and program implementers routinely supply similar data to utilities for rebate purposes.

In addition, simplified retrofit-specific compliance forms (including electronic versions) should be developed by CEC to further facilitate the compliance process. Ideally, these templates should be capable of accepting bulk text input directly

using a common worksheet format as described above. We are confident that this approach is achievable and can be accomplished while the 2016 Compliance Manual and Compliance Forms are being finalized.

Ecology Action believes that if the compliance issues outlined above are properly addressed, the proposed language will comprise a workable solution that, while imperfect, will allow the lighting retrofit industry to once again get back to work and begin installing the myriad of projects that are currently being stranded. Accordingly, we strongly urge the Commission to adopt the proposed 2016 Lighting Alterations and Modifications language in its current form.

Respectfully,

Gene Thomas

**Gene Thomas | Senior Energy Analyst**

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